

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO RAQUEL SHIVDAT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding leader, Raquel Shivdat.

Ms. Shivdat may not have a very visible personality, but behind the scenes she is one of the biggest influences in the explosion of Caribbean music entertainment in New York City. As Promotion and Marketing manager of the JMC Entertainment Inc. (which includes JMC records, JMC Trevini band and Rum Jungle Bar and Restaurant), Ms. Shivdat's responsibilities range from the promotion of shows to the management of music recordings. After more than twelve years in the entertainment industry, Ms. Shivdat has become a defining force.

Ms. Shivdat rose through the ranks in the family's business, starting as flyer designer at JMC Records and later working at the family's Roti Express diner. Additionally, Ms. Shivdat managed to pursue a degree in Fashion Marketing at Berkeley College in New Jersey, while managing her household as a wife and mother of two boys, Tyler and Shane.

At Rum Jungle, Ms. Shivdat produces at least one concert every month involving artists from the West Indies. The biggest names in Soca and Chutney music are regular performers at the club. Ms. Shivdat also brought the legendary Indian performers Babla and Kanchan to New York.

Ms. Shivdat also makes regular contributions to charitable organizations and committee projects in New York and has done fund raisers at Rum Jungle for the Prime Ministers of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

At 32 years old, Ms. Shivdat has become a key member of the JMC Company and she says that she always draws inspiration from her father Mohan Jaikairan who owns the business.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Shivdat, a wife, mother and entrepreneur, is both passionate about her chosen field of music and her community. Thus, we proudly recognize her today.

TRIBUTE TO ARMY SPECIALIST LOUIS NIEDERMEIER

HON. C. W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Army Specialist Louis E. Niedermeier of Largo, Florida, who gave the last full measure of service to our nation while serving in Iraq.

Our nation buried Louis with full military honors this afternoon at Arlington National Cemetery following his death by sniper fire in Ar Ramadi, Iraq on June 1st while serving with

his Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. He died just 2 weeks short of his 21st birthday.

Louis was a soldier's soldier. He wanted to enlist in the Army immediately after the events of 9-11, but he was only 17. His day came though as soon as he graduated from Pinellas Park High School in 2003. He followed in his father's footsteps and enlisted in the Army and a year later found himself serving in Iraq.

As a scout, Louis served on the front lines, providing critical targeting information to our air and artillery forces. He served with pride and with courage to bring about freedom in a land far from home. The true testament of Louis' service as a soldier came from the remembrances of three soldiers from his unit who served side-by-side with him in Iraq. The three were wounded in combat and were stateside at the time of Louis' death. They drove 36 hours nonstop from Fort Carson, Colorado to be with Louis and his family this afternoon. They said they did it because if the roles had been reversed Louis would have been there for them.

Louis' parents Edward A. Niedermeier and Denise A. Hoy were proud of their son. They were proud that he chose to serve his Nation in uniform. They were proud that he served with distinction to defend the principles of freedom and democracy. And they were proud that despite the fact that he served halfway around the world, first in Korea and then in Iraq, that he never forgot to remember his family and friends back home.

Both Ed and Denise marveled this afternoon that before they knew it Louis had grown from a boy into a man. They recounted Louis' love of family and country. And they emphasized that if Louis had it to do over again, they are convinced he would not have changed a thing.

Army Sergeant First Class Charles Welsh also attended today's services. He not only had the honor of serving with Louis in Iraq, but he was Louis' uncle. He recalled the day Louis came to him and told him he had enlisted in the Army as one of the proudest moments in this young man's life.

The price of freedom is great and in the case of Louis it was a life cut way too short. It was also the tragic interruption of a life together Louis had planned with his fiancée Sarah Hatley. Sarah and Louis were high school sweethearts who both volunteered to serve their Nation in uniform. Sarah is a Seaman serving aboard the U.S.S. *Fitzgerald*, stationed in Yokosuka, Japan. Her ship was underway off the coast of Australia when she learned of Louis' death.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation said goodbye to Specialist Louis E. Niedermeier today at Arlington National Cemetery. We said goodbye to a brave soldier who proudly wore the uniform in defense of freedom here and throughout the world. We said goodbye to a good son, a good nephew, and a good friend to so many people. And we said goodbye to the love of a young girl's life.

As the day draws to an end, we can take solace in the fact that America sleeps better

tonight and every night because of heroes like Louis Niedermeier who sacrificed all for the love of country and the love of freedom.

Mr. Speaker, a grateful Nation said thank you today to a courageous soldier and I join all my colleagues today in expressing our sorrow and our thanks for the life and the service of Louis Niedermeier and to the strong and loving family and friends he leaves behind. His was a life that was all too short in time but full of love and grace.

JUNETEENTH AFRICAN-AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate an African-American day of celebration of freedom and justice. Juneteenth marks the end of slavery for African-American communities around the country. It is a day to embrace our freedom and equality, to reflect on the progress we have made as people, and to ponder our future role in this country.

Despite the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863, it took two and a half years—June 1865—for the liberation of all slaves in the United States to occur. For 140 years now, African-Americans have celebrated the final attainment of their freedom on the 19th of June. Tradition has it that it is the date when news of emancipation from slavery was finally delivered to slaves in Texas, the furthest point from Washington where slavery existed. The most accepted explanation is that the delay was caused by the primitive communications of the day, but some historians believe that the news of emancipation was deliberately denied to slaves.

On this Juneteenth, African-Americans across the country will contemplate the importance of their freedom compared to their ancestors. They will reflect on their ability and rights to hold a job, to ride a bus, to own property, to live unencumbered by the government, and to make decisions about their own lives. Some will think about the obstacles that remain in their way of achieving the "American dream." Others will ponder the future of their children and the opportunities ahead of them.

I, for one, would think both about how far we have come as a country and how much further we need to go to erase racism and discrimination from our society. Once the slaves of plantation owners, African-Americans now can freely move about the country, hold jobs and careers of importance, marry their chosen partner, provide for their families, raise their kids, and live in true freedom. African-Americans are graduating from college at increasing rates; receiving medical, professional, and doctoral degrees; working in major corporations and businesses; and making decisions about the future of this country. We have come a long way in our struggle for equality.

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